



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/646,855	08/21/2003	Tadahiro Ohmi	8075-1055-1	1521
466	7590	09/07/2007		EXAMINER
YOUNG & THOMPSON				LAVILLA, MICHAEL E
745 SOUTH 23RD STREET				
2ND FLOOR			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
ARLINGTON, VA 22202			1775	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			09/07/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/646,855	Applicant(s) OHMI ET AL.
	Examiner Michael La Villa	Art Unit 1775

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 August 2007 (RCE).

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 3 and 5 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 3 and 5 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 30 December 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date .
4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ .
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 22 August 2007 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:
 3. The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
4. Claims 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.
5. Regarding Claim 3, it is unclear whether the term "material consisting of chromium" necessarily means zero-valent chromium metal. It is unclear what is meant by the phrase "consisting of chromium oxide." Does this mean any chromium oxide compound? Is it limited to a specific material, such as "chromium trioxide"? It is unclear whether the heat treatment in oxidizing atmosphere necessarily results in elimination of the entire chromium film so that the metallic material has a "chromium oxide" passivation film "formed thereon."

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

8. Claims 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuze et al. USPN 4,119,761 in view of Hutkin USPN 4,088,544 for the reasons of record in the Office Action mailed on 22 March 2007. Kuze teaches air oxidation which inherently teaches oxidation in inert gas since nitrogen gas, a component of air, is inert, i.e., non-reactive.

Response to Amendment

9. In view of applicant's amendments and arguments, applicant traverses the section 103 rejection over Kuze in view of Hutkin of the Office Action mailed on 22 March 2007. Applicant argues that Kuze teaches emissivity-improving agents which are precluded by the claimed "consisting of chromium" limitation. Kuze

suggests that the chromium layer may be formed with pure chromium and with or without emissivity-improving agents in the substrate. When there are no such agents in the substrate, they would not diffuse to the chromium layer, and so the claimed method is suggested by the prior art. When there are such agents in the substrate, the claimed method is suggested by the prior art during that time period during which such agents have not yet diffused to the formed chromium oxide layer. It would be expected that the chromium oxide layer would begin forming at the outermost portion of the chromium layer prior to diffusing emissivity-improving agents reaching the outermost portion of the chromium layer that has been reacted to form a chromium oxide passivation layer. With respect to Hutkin, as mentioned in an earlier Office Action, Hutkin is relied upon solely for teaching the relationship between substrate surface roughness and coating layer surface roughness. Hence, applicant's arguments about the incompatibility of the teachings of Kuze and Hutkin due to differences in coating preparation methods are not persuasive. Rejection is maintained.

Conclusion

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael La Villa whose telephone number is (571) 272-1539. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.
11. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jennifer McNeil can be reached on (571) 272-1540. The fax phone

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

12. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Michael La Villa
27 August 2007



MICHAEL E. LAVILLA PH.D.
PRIMARY EXAMINER